NAQCC News

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1. SPRINT: We are continuing our prize prize this month. Our key collecting book prize was a big hit in the June sprint and our two book winners WB8LZG and KA8MPT are delighted with the books. Starting this month and continuing indefinitely we'll be giving away a set of books in CW on CD and a CW course on CD to the highest scoring MEMBER who hasn't won the CD's previously. Club officers are not eligible. The CD's are generously donated by Chuck K7QO. Thank you Chuck.

In addition to the CD's we also have our usual array of goodies. Our Special Award certificate this sprint goes to the one working the most USA call areas. Then of course, our usual certificates for 1st place in our two categories, or 1st and 2nd if we only have entries in one category. We also offer a nice certificate to the one making the highest score who has never won a certificate in any of our previous sprints. So there is a lot to shoot for in this month's sprint. Let's set another record turnout this month!

GenLog, thanks to the kindness and generosity of Dave, W3KM has been modified again to be even more compatible with our sprints. The output now conforms exactly to the required format we use in the master cross-checking database. So please update GenLog again if you use it.

If you use paper logging for our sprints, we have a log and summary form available for you to download and fill in with your text editor. Download here - Form - Instructions. Or even easier you can just enter your paper log into GenLog after the contest and it will output an ideal log for emailing to us. Much easier and probably faster than typing your log into a word processor to send to us. Also with the updated GenLog data file it will also check that you copied the NAQCC number and SPC correctly. However be careful with the SPC since some stations may operate portable from a different SPC than that in the data file.

If you're entering one of our sprints for the first time, we welcome you. Keep in mind the sprints are designed to be low key (no pun intended). So try to keep your speed down - we want to acquaint newcomers to CW and contesting with the procedures of operating in contests and sprints. Thank you.

Full Sprint info here.

2. JUNE CHALLENGE RESULTS: Of course we had two challenges in June. In keeping our promise of making the challenges full month long events, we had Mike KC2EGL's Create a Call Sign Challenge. Then since our FD challenge has been so popular we also re-ran it this month.

The Call Sign challenge was very intriguing. It was complicated, and the real challenge was not making the contacts, but manipulating the calls of the stations worked into other call signs. The easiest way to do it was to use a spreadsheet. I used that method and wound up using all the calls of stations I worked during the month save for 2. So I got the 'most for my money'. The winner was K3WWP who made the calls of all the club officers for 29 points. Complete results via the link below.

The FD challenge wound up with a 'threepeat' winner for the portable category in N4UW who has now swept all three of our FD challenges. Looks like the rest of the portable operators will have to increase their efforts in 2008.

I thought I was going to steal the home category with just 2 states, but I'm glad I didn't. VA3RKM submitted a late entry with 17 states worked from his home to take that title.

This month's 5 band challenge is a good one. It wasn't too much of a challenge for VE3HUR and K3WWP though. They both had completed the challenge by the time July 2nd came to an end.

Full challenge info here.

3. LATEST BEAR HUNT NEWS: From our Bear Master Ron, K5DUZ: Bruce, WY7N is planning to operate portable from Utah near the East Fork of the Bear River during the period 7/30 - 8/4. If you need Utah 2XQRP check the Bear Hunt webpage for more details as the date approaches.

Full bear hunt info here.

4. GENERAL CLUB NEWS: Our club President Tom Mitchell has a new vanity call after upgrading to Extra class in June. Tom is now WY3H. Hopefully all appropriate changes have been made on the web site. KB3LFC is (was) on the web site 532 times. I left the old call in places like the old sprint results, etc. But if you see a place you think should be updated, let me (K3WWP) know.

- Tom also has a very interesting concept for the club. Make it a point to read about it in the next edition of the newsletter due out on July 28th. It's something completely different and could be very beneficial to club members.

- PLEASE if you have a web site, a listing on QRZ.net or other Internet presence, be sure to proudly display your NAQCC number. Remember if you want to make it a bit more fancy, our logo is available in different sizes for download here. Many folks still don't know about the club and may find out through your web site or QRZ.net listing.

- An item from K3WWP's web site diary (http://k3wwp.com/) concering the club: Scott AE5BH had this thought on the NAQCC Spring Ragchew Contest - "Perhaps operators didn't enter their Ragchew results since the spirit of ragchewing is to get on the air, chat, and not pay attention to time so you can log it, etc. Just my thought on the subject."

That's probably accurate, but if that's the case, there is a fault in the thinking of the hams doing the rag chewing. If they report the rag chews, then other hams will know they like to rag chew and will give them even more rag chews. Also if you make a rag chew and don't report it, only you and the ham you work know about it. If you report it, then other hams know you are doing your part to preserve CW on the bands, and they see that hams still love to rag chew using CW.

- We have still another prize to give away. Karl N3IJR donated a Hendricks QRP Kit - the DC40 transceiver - to be given away to some member. The kit has all components and PC board, but an enclosure and plugs will have to be supplied by the winner. Tom and I decided we'll give it away in conjuction with our third anniversary in October. More details as they become available. If this keeps up, we'll need an additional officer just to handle our prize prizes. That's wonderful.

- Continuing with the prize theme, I just received the key paddle handles from Gregg, WB8LZG that we are going to be giving away in conjunction with our club challenges. He sent 13 sets, so we can continue the prize for at least a year. They are just beautiful to look at, and anyone would be proud to have them on his or her paddle or bug. Having seen them in person so to speak, I can say that they appear even nicer than the pictures on Gregg's web site. We'll have more details on the prize in the next newsletter. It will start with our August challenge.

- To keep track of all our many prizes, we're posting a new page on the web site. Check it out here and make plans now for what you are going to try to win.

- The deadline for your guess as to when the NAQCC signs up its 2,000th member is now past and here's how you guessed:

Aug 3 - SWL-15 (Bob Hunter)
Aug 12 - AE5BH
Aug 14 - WU7F
Sep 11 - NT9K
Nov 30 - N3IJR

The following submitted a guess but are not eligible to win or have requested we donate the CD to someone else if they win. Since we have enough qualified participants, we'll simply eliminate the following from the contest while still noting and appreciating W0CH's kind offer.

Aug 14 - W0CH (donate)
Aug 15 - WY3H (officer)
Aug 31 - K3WWP (officer)

Now we just have to wait for that memorable date to arrive. The three winners then will be notified via email as well as announced in the first newsletter after the date. The CD's will be sent as soon as possible after the date.

5. MEMBER NEWS: This is YOUR section of the newsletter. We want to know what our

members are doing with CW and QRP on the ham bands. We will only present POSITIVE news here. Brag about that new rare country you worked last week. Tell how you finally worked KL7 to finish your 40 meters WAS. Share your excitement in working halfway around the world to Australia with 100 mW. Tell us how you built that new little QRP rig or keyer paddle from scratch. Give us the URL to your brand new CW/QRP web site so we can all take a look. Do a review of your K1 you just finished building. I think those are enough examples to let you know what kind of news we want here. Basically anything POSITIVE that concerns CW and/or QRP. Nothing about other modes or QRO please.

Send your news items to our news editor Paul KD2MX at **KD2MX@ARRL.NET**.

- **From Bill, W9BOK #0242** - I just celebrated 20 years since my first heart transplant in 1987. I needed a second one in 2001. As an organ recipient I am keenly aware of the shortage of donated organs today. MANY AWAIT THE GIFT OF LIFE, but unfortunately for many the wait is too long and they do not receive the needed organs in time. As many as seven people may be helped from one person donating organs.

The time to decide to donate is before the tragic death of a loved one. It is important for you discuss this with your family members so you know what their wishes are before the decision has to be made. The last 20 years have been a gift that I can never adequately thank the families whose generosity made it possible. I only hope that this generosity in some way has eased their loss.

- **From Mark, WU7F #0257** - Field Day was a success in that I was able to demonstrate to non-CW hams the advantages of CW and QRP. Our small group was made up of 6 hams and a couple of prospective hams. Only two of us use CW. The other CW operator is my elmer... but he loves QRO. I wanted to show the others in the group the advantages of CW as well as QRP. I showed them how many more points we could claim for contacts if we didn't have the 100W SSB station that forced us to take a 2x multiplier rather than a 5x. If they had got the 500 Watt amp working with the generator, they would would not have received any power multiplier! QRO is not always a good idea, even if you have the gear.

I took the K2 and hooked it up to a battery. I ran the whole contest off that same battery - no need for a generator. I had my laptop plugged into the power coming off the generator, however. I'm going to have to get a 12V setup for the laptop (it takes 19.5VDC, what a weird voltage requirement!)

The other thing I was able to demonstrate was the fact that using a QRP radio is less hassle. Before setting up everything, I took a random-wire antenna and snaked it through some trees, plugged it into a LDG auto-tuner with the K2 on the other end that was plugged into the cigarette lighter on my brother's truck and made some contacts while we were waiting for people to assemble so we could start putting up the real antennas on Friday night. That was fun to show. It only took about 7 minutes, and half of that was spent trying to get the antenna wire untangled so I could string in up in some trees!

The K2 sounded much better than the other radio, so I think that showed well, too.

- **From Bruce, WY7N #1127** - This was the most satisfying FD for me in years; and FD is a yearly tradition for me. The difference was this [NAQCC June FD] challenge.

I didn't have a lot of time to operate because someone had the nerve to schedule a family reunion on FD weekend! My sons and I did it anyway. We camped in some rustic cabins in the Utah mountains near Fish Lake. I had to get permission from the manager of the resort to string some dipoles between the VERY tall pines. Once reassured that I wasn't planning on

climbing them, permission was granted.

I'm getting pretty good with my E-Z Hang. Actually, this time I was using a home-brew version built using a wrist-rocket, fishing reel and some hose clamps. It cost about $40 using all new parts.

Here's how I string an antenna using a E-Z Hang:

I tie a 1 oz. sinker to the line on the reel. I set the reel to cast. When drawing back the sling shot, I make sure the light fishing line will not catch on anything when released (I've lost a lot of sinkers by skipping this step - it takes off without the line). I aim a bit higher than feels natural. The drag of the line causes the shots to fall quite short. I'm an instinctive archer (I don't use sights, I just aim until it "feels" right). Wrist rockets feel like a nice recurve bow to me. It's extremely important to have a LONG follow through. It needs to last several seconds. The face of the reel must be kept pointing where the line is going so the line flows freely from the reel.

If it's a good cast, the sinker (and line) will pass over the top of the tree and fall nicely on the other side of the tree. I then tie some heavy (50-80 lb test) line on to the light line and reel it back over the tree. (Note: When reeling the line in, it works better to walk backwards without winding, then walk forwards while winding the line in. This reduces the tension and it's much easier to spin the reel.) Once the heavy line reaches the reel, I tie it to the antenna and use it to pull the wire up.

I have to admit that my aim was off on the first line I put up for the day. I kept hitting the trunk of the tree and loosing sinkers. After about seven shots I finally got the first line over. After that, the rest went very well. I guess I was rusty. I need to do this more than once a year.

My family members kept muttering things about my sanity. They don't realize that at least half of FD is simply getting a useable station going. Actually using the station is just frosting on the cake.

After getting antennas up, I had to socialize with my extended family members for most of the afternoon and evening.

Finally, at about 8:30pm local time we had two transmitters up and running. My oldest son took the QRO SSB seat, myself CW (QRP of course). My son crashed and went to bed early. I kept on until about 2AM. We didn't operate at all on Sunday.

As stated before, this was a very satisfying FD. Instead of trying to run up a high score, I spent all the time searching and pouncing for new states. Very rarely did I need to call someone more than once. Two exceptions were a Hawaii and a CU2 station. I couldn't get them to answer my call on 20M. I think they had a large pile-up on them. It was very satisfying to work the KH6 later in the evening on 40M. I didn't hear the CU2 again.

What fun. We had a blast!

- **From Paul, KD2MX #1091** - My Field Day experience was short but enjoyable. I was in Chicago to move my daughter back to NJ and had taken the KX1 along in hopes of grabbing some operating time on Saturday along Lake Michigan. But first I had to deal with some car trouble and then get everything packed up for the drive home on Sunday. Then a steady rain persisted into mid-afternoon but stopped in time for me to get on the air for a bit.

I walked over to the Lake from our hotel and found a convenient rock to setup on. A nearby tree supported a ~28ft wire and I laid out the counterpoise. I managed to make 14 contacts on

40 and 20 meters running about 1.5 watts. Most stations didn't have a clue that I was calling them so I tried to stick with calling only the loudest signals.

After an hour I was almost shivering from the cool, damp wind blowing off the lake. Since I was dressed for a warm, sunny day, I decided to pack up and head back to the hotel.

My QTH along the lake was south of the Loop and it provides a great view of downtown Chicago even with an overcast sky. I spent a very pleasant sunny afternoon operating there last fall and it was nice to be back and able to participate a bit in Field Day.

The publication of our next newsletter will be announced via email to all members for whom we have a valid email address unless you specifically have unsubscribed from the email.

If you came directly to this newsletter, we invite you now to browse the NAQCC Web Site.